

Meeting of the CCSP Unified Synthesis Product Development
Committee on "Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States"
Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, Woods Hole, MA
August 21-22, 2008

Dr. Christopher Miller, Designated Federal Officer of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Change Science Program (CCSP) Unified Synthesis Product (USP) Development Committee called this third FACA meeting to order at 8:25 am on August 21 and described the rules of a FACA meeting. The meeting proceeded in accordance with the published agenda (http://www.cpo.noaa.gov/index.jsp?pg=./ccsp/33_meetings.jsp).

Public Comment

There was no request from the public to make an oral comment or statement during the official public comment period.

Discussion

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the comments received during the July 17 – August 14 USP Peer Mail Review and Public Comment Period, to formulate responses, and to begin modifying the report, accordingly. Comments received came from the general public, from the invited "blue ribbon" mail reviewers, and from federal agencies.

The meeting was structured to accommodate plenary sessions, breakout sessions on the report's sectors and regions, and special breakout sessions as needed, e.g., national/global climate change, adaptation.

Co-chair Tom Karl noted that the author team should adopt a uniform citation policy for the 21 CCSP Synthesis & Assessment Products (SAPs). When a statement in the USP report is attributable to an SAP, the SAP should be cited at that point. Furthermore, it may be useful to the reader in many instances to have a specific chapter or section in the SAP called out in the citation.

Other issues discussed included: (1) consistency in the uncertainty language; (2) length of the document, i.e., shortening to the extent possible; (3) maintaining objectivity, avoiding advocacy. The discussion on advocacy touched upon the adaptation examples in the text. In response to an OMB comment about a perception of support for particular adaptation measures, the group agreed that the

examples chosen would be concrete and illustrative, but would not imply endorsement of a particular approach. The science of adaptation has not progressed to include analyses of the effectiveness of specific measures. The boxes for "Adaptation Strategies" will become "Adaptation Examples". It was also agreed that, to the extent possible, it would be useful to bring the adaptation discussion into the text at the point where a corresponding impact is first introduced. Additionally, where it makes sense, the adaptation issues should be tied to the various SAPs.

The point was made that, even though mitigation is not a focus of this report, it will be important to explain the relationship between mitigation and adaptation. For example, mitigation measures will influence the degree to which we will need to adapt.

There are some issues, e.g., downscaling, where the CCSP Office could provide supplemental material in the form of Fact Sheets. The supplemental material could also be a place for graphics deleted from the main USP report. The main report then would be relieved of having to incorporate some background material.

There was discussion of the distinction between climate variability and climate change and the need to emphasize that not every impact is related to climate change.

Peter Schultz provided a CCSP Office perspective on a path forward for completion of the synthesis product following this initial review phase. The scope of the report should be clearly stated and be consistent with the original charter of the committee. Inclusion of recent peer-reviewed literature can be used to supplement the content of the SAPs. The next draft of the USP should be subject to a second expert, public, and agency review cycle.

Meeting Decisions and Actions

Where possible, the global section and the sector chapters will be shortened.

Links between regional and national statements will be made.

The Complex Interactions chapter material will be pulled into other sections.

The photos in the report will be reviewed to ensure that they support the text and are not subject to misinterpretation. Filtering of the photos will also help to shorten the document.

The text will stay away from “prescriptive strategies”, e.g., using words like “must”, “should”, “will”, and “shall”. Options will be emphasized.

A tentative schedule for completing the USP was introduced. This schedule will be refined after this meeting. Responses to the review comments will be finalized and a second draft prepared. A meeting of a subset of the authors and support team will be held at NCDC (Asheville, NC) to do the layout/editorial work for the next draft. A Federal Register Notice will be issued that alerts the community to the intent to have a second review cycle.

Attendance List

Dave Anderson (NOAA)
Virginia Burkett (USGS)
Jerry Hatfield (USDA) – via phone
Tom Karl (NOAA)
Jay Lawrimore (NOAA)
Dave McGuire (USGS)
Tom Peterson (NOAA)
Roger Pulwarty (NOAA) – via phone
Eileen Shea (NOAA)
Michael Savonis (DOT)
Don Boesch (Univ. of Maryland)
Stewart Cohen (Environment Canada)
Jerry Hatfield (USDA) – via phone
Katharine Hayhoe (Texas Tech)
Tony Janetos (PNNL)
Jerry Melillo (Marine Biological Laboratory)
Ed Miles (Univ. of Washington) – via phone
Evan Mills (LBNL) – via phone
Jonathan Patz (Univ. of Wisconsin)
Ben Santer (LLNL)
Michael Wehner (LBNL)
Thomas Wilbanks (Oak Ridge Nat. Lab)
Don Wuebbles (Univ. of Ill)
Brad Udall (Univ. of Colorado)
John Stone (Carleton University)
Gerry Schwartz (Independent Scholar) – via phone

Lynne Carter (Adaptation Network)
Jonathan Overpeck (Univ. of Arizona)
John Walsh (University of Alaska – Fairbanks)
Nancy Grimm (Arizona State University)
Chris Miller (NOAA)
Bill Murray (STG)
Sara Veasey (NOAA)
Anne Waple (CCSPO)
Susan Hassol (Climate Communication)
Tim Owen (NCDC)
Chad McNutt (NOAA – Office of the Under Secretary)
Peter Schultz (CCSPO)
Fabien Laurier (CCSPO)
Brian Jackson (UCAR)